

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

RSR-01 /090 W

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R 181518Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2887

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 5162

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR, (LASTIRI, RAUL)

SUBJECT: BIO ON PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT RAUL LASTIRI

REF STATE 137891

1. RAUL ALBERTO LASTIRI, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES SINCE MAY 3, 1973, BECAME PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT OF ARGENTINA ON JULY 13, 1973 UNDER THE LAW OF SUCCESSION WHEN PRESIDENT CAMPORA AND VICE PRESIDENT LIMA RESIGNED AND PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT OF SENATE DIAZ BIALET (REPORTEDLY AT PERON'S REQUEST) TRAVELED ABOARD. A LOYAL JUSTICIALISTA PARTY MEMBER OF LONG STANDING, AND SUPPORTER OF JUAN DOMINGO PERON DURING THE PERON ADMINISTRATION, LASTIRI HELD A NUMBER OF POSITIONS INCLUDING SEVERAL IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES; HE ALSO UNDERTOOK A NUMBER OF SPECIAL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS.

2. LASTIRI WAS BORN SEPTEMBER 11, 1915. HE IS MARRIED FOR THE SECOND TIME TO NAORM BEATRICE LOPEZ REGA, DAUGHTER OF PERON'S PRIVATE SECRETARY AND MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE. HE HAS TWO GROWN DAUGHTERS AND A SON BY HIS PREVIOUS MARRIAGE. THE LATTER IS ONE OF HIS PRIVATE SECRETARIES. HE IS REPUTEDLY A PRACTICING CATHOLIC. HIS PARENTS WERE OF THE MIDDLE CLASS.

3. LASTIRI ATTENDED THE DOMINGO FAUSTINO SARMIENTO SECONDARY SCHOOL. WHILE ATTENDING UNIVERSITY HE PARTICIPATED IN THE
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NATIONALIST, ANTI-COMMUNIST MOVEMENT.

4. BEGINNING IN JUNE 1943 LASTIRI WAS PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR PRESS AND RADIO. IN DECEMBER 1947 HE WAS THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF THE ARGENTINE MIXED TELEPHONE ENTERPRISE. IN JULY 1948, WHILE SERVING AS PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MAIL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, HE ACTED AS PROTOCOL SECRETARY FOR THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS CONGRESS HELD IN BUENOS AIRES. IN JULY 1949 HE BECAME PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE NATIONAL MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS OSCAR NICOLINI. BETWEEN 1949 AND 1951 HE WAS THE MINISTER'S REPRESENTATIVE ON THE SOCIAL SECURITY MUTUAL ASSOCIATION OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS. IN 1950 LASTIRI WAS PARTMGF TWO SPECIAL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, ONE TO ASUNCION AND ONE TO WASHINGTON, AND IN 1951 WAS PART OF THE SPECIAL DELEGATION TO BRAZIL ON THE OCCASION OF THE ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY PRESIDENT GETULIO VARGAS. IN 1955 HE WAS APPOINTED SECRETARY AND CONSUL IN THE ARGENTINE EMBASSY IN SANTIAGO DE CHILE WHERE HE REMAINED ONLY A FEW MONTHS UNTIL THE BEGIN UNDERLINE GOLPE DE ESTADO END UNDERLINE WHICH OVERTHREW PERON LATER THE SAME YEAR. LITTLE WAS HEARD OF LASTIRI DURING THE ENSUING FIFTEEN YEARS. HE SHOWED UP AS ONE OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE OFFICIAL PARTIDO JUSTICIALISTA ORGAN, LAS BASE AROUND 1970. HE IS STILL ON THE LAS BASES STAFF. INDEED, THE MAGAZINE'S OFFICES ARE LOCATED ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE BUILDING IN WHICH HE LIVES.

5. LASTIRI IS CONSIDERED BY THE EMBASSY TO BE A MODERATE PERONIST. HE WAS FIRST INTRODUCED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS EARLY THIS YEAR AND HAS HAD FREQUENT CONTACTS SINCE THEN. HE HAS BEEN EXCEPTIONALLY FRIENDLY AND OPEN AND HAS SEVERAL TIMES OFFERED TO BE OF ASSISTANCE IN MATTERS SUCH AS THE PROJECTED EXPROPRIATION OF CERTAIN AMERICAN BANKS AND ARRANGING INTRODUCTIONS TO OTHER KEY PERONIST LEADERS.

6. WHILE LASTIRI'S STRONG POSITION WITH PERON RESULTS AT LEAST IN PART FROM HIS TIES WITH LOPEZ REGA. LASTIRI HAS DEVELOPED A POSITION IN HIS OWN RIGHT. IN FACT, THERE ARE THOSE WHO SAY PERON TRUSTS LASTIRI MORE THAN LOPEZ REGA AND THAT IF THERE IS ANY LIKELY SUCCESSOR TO PERON, IT IS THE FORMER AND NOT THE LATTER.

7. NEITHER RAUL LASTIRI NOR HIS PRESENT WIFE NORMA, A BEAUTIFUL CONFIDENTIAL

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AND VIVACIOUS YOUNG LADY OF 28, ARE KNOWN TO SPEAK ANY LANGUAGE OTHER THAN SPANISH.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BUENOS05162
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS KREBS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730727/aaaaatjk.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 STATE 137891
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <06-Feb-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BIO ON PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT RAUL LASTIRI
TAGS: PINT, AR, (LASTIRI, RAUL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005